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A S K E T C H
O F T H E
T I M E S;
O R,
M E M O I R S
O F
L O R D D E R V I L L E.

I N T W O V O L U M E S.

V O L. II.

L O N D O N :

Printed for J. BEW, Paternoster-Row;

A N D

E. MACKLEW, opposite the Opera-House, Hay-Market.

M D C C L X X X I.

A S K E T C H

O F T H E

T I M E



L O R D D E R V I L L E

I N T W O V O L U M E S

V O L . I I

L O N D O N :

P R I N T E D B Y J . B . P A R K E R

I N S T R U C T I O N S T O T H E M A J O R

M E M O I R S
O F
L O R D D E R V I L L E.

L A D Y A N N D E R V I L L E,
T O
L A D Y B E T T Y P L O M E R.

THINK not, my dear Lady Betty, because I have neglected answering yours so long, that I mean to slight you, or that it is possible for me to be better engaged than when employing my thoughts on those happy hours we spend when together.

VOL. II.

B

I long

I long for the time that will bring me back to my more than home, but must dispense at present with all such flattering hopes; that peace, that tranquillity, which I there so profusely enjoy, must for a time give way to bustle and confusion.—Such a life do I now lead—so contradictory to what I always experienced—’tis most certainly a life of gaiety—and fashionable I believe from the number that so implicitly follow it; but never I hope will it be my lot to be obliged, for obliged I must be, if ever I become one of its votaries.—I will not attempt a description either of the giddy circle I am frequently with, nor of the numerous places to which we resort,

fort, as I am fully convinced I should find my want of capacity to relate distinctly the croud of ideas they have left impressed on my mind, but will reserve them till my return, when they may serve to amuse many a winter's evening.

As you have particularly requested an account of the wedding day, I will endeavour to give a summary, though not a minute one.—Sir William resolved to make it a day of joy and festivity, having as he said, no notion of huddling it up, as if they were ashamed of what they were doing; to accomplish which he insisted on its being kept at his villa,

situated about six miles from town, and that he would have the conducting of the whole business; to which the bridegroom made no kind of objection, not seeming desirous of taking any trouble about the matter.

It was settled that I should go with my brother in the morning, in an elegant chariot built on purpose for the occasion;—his Grace, Sir William, and Lady Arabella, went the preceding evening:—About nine o'clock up comes George to my dressing-room, and I not being quite ready, he sat himself down, told me he could not have thought I had been half so cruel, it was down right ill-

ill-nature to detain him when he ought to be upon his knees before his bride.

“ My dear George, I am sorry”—

“ My dear Nancy, and so you
“ ought to be—but heigh-day!
“ what’s that penitential countenance
“ about?—why you look as sorrow-
“ ful as if it was *you* going to be
“ married.”

“ To judge from the effect it has
“ upon you, it would then be quite
“ contrary, for your appearance is
“ so truly charming, it almost makes
“ me wish the case my own.”

“ Does it?—then I wish it was
“ with all my soul, for confound me
“ if I would not much sooner attend
“ your nuptials than my own.”

“ Now that is polite.”

“ I cant tell whether you think it
“ polite or not, but I am certain it
“ is a fact.”

“ Are you serious?”

“ As ever I was in my life—but
“ come along, and let’s talk of some-
“ thing else, for I half conceit I hear
“ the chains rattling about my neck
“ already.”

When

When taking my hand, he led me to the chariot, assumed his usual spirits, and was most delightful company all the way.

Soon after we got to Sir William's, in he came with Lady Arabella; she was most elegantly dressed, and look'd delightfully, when leading her towards George, who rose to meet them, the old gentleman presented him her hand, which he received with all that *naïveté* that he has ever been distinguished by.

The ceremony being performed, and a numerous company assembled, the day was spent with the greatest

conviviality possible, there appearing a kind of emulation who should render themselves most agreeable—except Lord Moreden and Sir John Mad, who were truly ridiculous, at least to me, for they followed me about and teased me with their nonsense every time they could get near, and it was with the greatest difficulty I avoided them at all.—In the evening we was to have a ball, and I was terribly apprehensive I should be obliged to dance with one of these coxcombs, who had separately requested my hand, which I excused in the best manner I was able; at last I observed Sir John talking to my brother and looking towards me, therefore

therefore concluded it was all over, for being disengaged I could not have denied him, when Sir Thomas Charlton came to me, and after some little introduction, said he had intended himself the honour of requesting my hand for the evening, but was fearful he had been too dilatory to attain that happiness, as he had but little hopes of finding me unengaged.

“ Had Sir Thomas thought it a
 “ happiness he would not have run
 “ the hazard of my being engaged,
 “ but old acquaintance are always
 “ thought on last—here comes George,
 “ now I’ll appeal to him if it is not
 “ true.”

Yes,

“Yes, yes; you are very right,
“my dear sister, be what it will—
“you’ll excuse me, Tom, for I must
“side with the girl’s to-day.”

“And every day, to be sure, Sir.”

“No, my dear, that’s as hereafter
“may be—but what have you been
“doing to poor Sir John Mad? for
“he has trotted at my heels for this
“half hour, plaguing me to come
“and intercede with your divinity to
“accept of him for a partner—he’s
“positive you’ll not refuse me any
“favour, especially on my wedding-
“day—therefore am I come to beseech
“your ladyship to dance with him.”

“Hold

“ Hold, my Lord; if Lady Ann
“ is disengaged, I hope I may be per-
“ mitted to lay some claim to that
“ honour.”

“ You do?”

“ Yes, and shall not easily forego
“ it, unless her ladyship gives me a
“ peremptory denial—what say you,
“ madam, will you favour me?”

“ You see how I am circumstanced,
“ George—what would you have me
“ do?”

“ In my opinion, Lady Ann, (re-
“ turn'd Sir Thomas) that you may
“ easily

“ easily determine; for as it is agreed
“ by all parties that I have behaved
“ very reprehensible, you cannot pos-
“ sibly be wrong in acting just the
“ contrary — think of your old ac-
“ quaintance first.”

“ Well then, I believe it must be
“ so.”

“ Very pretty, indeed! — a mighty
“ fine negociation I have made of it,
“ truly — but hark ye, Charlton, do
“ you know the danger you run, for
“ should Sir John be smitten with the
“ girl, he’ll challenge you as sure as
“ you are alive — egad I’ll go and ad-
“ vise him to it directly.”

Thus

Thus, my dear, was I relieved from the impending danger of an evening's impertinence, and by one whose conversation I fear is too agreeable—perhaps while I thought myself fortunate in having escap'd the persecution of an hour, I was encouraging a foundation for years of pain. Why is he so very attentive, so assiduous to render me any little service? but is he not so to all?—he is!—then why do I harbour ideas so foreign to his intentions!—yet I fancied, when my brother mentioned Sir John, there appeared an anxiety in his countenance—the look he gave me, had I been ever so inclined, would have prevented my consent—his manner;
his

his actions, his looks, would all persuade me he loves, while his tongue declares he but esteems me as the sister of his friend.

I may very justly deserve your censure, my love, for the impropriety of dwelling on the merits of a person who does not, and perhaps never may think me worth his notice—but because man has the privilege of declaring his attachment, does it follow that our sex are blind till then, and that their declarations awaken our sensibility—no—we are of an easier nature and more prone to have our affections steadily engaged—therefore, when it happens to be on an object by whom

we are disregarded, we may be sensible of the error, and yet only able to bewail it as a misfortune.

Although I shudder at the idea of having these sentiments seen, yet why should I attempt to conceal them from her who has ever possess'd a key to the inmost recesses of my heart—and from whose truth, constancy, and friendship, I have experienced a more than sisterly love, even from the time when harmless sports beguil'd our juvenile hours, and deluded us into unthinking errors.

What an ease to the burthen'd mind
to have a friend in whose breast you
can

can safely lodge the secrets of the soul!—such are you to me, and that I may never lose or be undeserving, such a blessing is the continual and never omitted prayer of,

your truly affectionate,

ANN DERVILLE.

LET-

LETTER II.]

LORD DERVILLE,

TO

SIR THOMAS CHARLTON.

Dear Tom,

AFTER having been furrounded by all my friends, and hurried from one pastime to another for more than a month, to find myself forsaken all at once, and left, as I may say, with only one companion, and that one my wife! had, to me, a most melancholy appearance—to become a domestic man was what I had no kind

of relish for, and I dreaded every ill-consequence that could possibly occur—but rejoice with me, Charlton, that my apprehensions were unjust and without foundation, for instead of meeting with that dull, insipid sameness which I fancied would attend every matrimonial conference, our time glides on with the greatest conviviality—I was always fearful of experiencing that capricious change of sentiment and behaviour I have frequently observed new-married ladies affect;—but, thank Heaven! mine still retains that attention to her person and agreeable vivacity she ever did, and if our present tranquillity does but continue I shall commemorate

rate the day I resign'd my freedom
for such pleasing captivity.

You may shake your wise head, say
it is but the honey-moon yet, and that
I shall tell a different story some little
time hence — such may be the case,
but I have one argument induces me
to think you will be mistaken, which
is, that as we never were desperately
fond, but began in a steady track, we
shall be able to maintain the same
pace, without flying out, to the jour-
ney's end—at least I am certain it is
for our mutual interest to endeavour
it, for as we are yok'd for life our
taking different roads will answer no
purpose but to gall and fret each

other without being of any permanent advantage to either—by this you will perceive, Tom, that matrimony has almost converted me into a philosopher already, and will be hard indeed if I don't reap the advantage of my own maxims.

I wish I could contrive some inticement that might tempt you to spend more of your time in town, and not bury yourself thus in that old mansion as though you intended to turn hermit—can't you marry, man, and come live among us—then you and I, with our spouses, should be able to make a sober party at any time—that would be so comfortable, you know—
besides

besides we might make an exchange now and then by way of enjoying a little variety—or have you really sworn to die an old bachelor?—if so perhaps you are in the right, for the Lord knows it will be a monstrous difficult matter to find a fit match for your romantic notions.—she must be so mild and tender, so loving and constant—aye! there's no such girls now-a-days! she must be brought from the clouds on purpose!—though I am somehow of opinion that Cupid has been at some of his vagaries with you, for I have observed every symptom of the unfortunate lover for some time past, although I have not been able to fathom the bottom of it, and from thence

I am certain has arose this strong attachment for Charlton-place—as there to be sure you may ramble uninterrupted through the woods, and murmur at the fair-one's cruelty, without any danger of being overheard, and I doubt not have tortured the inoffensive elms with carving the lovely initials—nay, I should not be surpris'd if the whole rookery, by listening to your frequent moans, had forgot their own wild notes, and croaked nought but your beloved's name—egad I think I'll come on purpose to hear, as it will be an excellent maxim to discover this divinity, unless you have new nam'd your dulcina and call'd her after one of her sister goddesses,
—if

if so I shall be as much in the dark as ever—but where is the need of all this secrecy? I can't rival you now, and I might be of some service—however take your own way, and you have my hearty wishes it may turn out for the best, though I never had any opinion of these respectful adorations, for if a resolute lover happens to intervene, you cringing souls are thrown aside ninety-nine times out of an hundred—while you are sighing in a corner, and admiring at distance, lest your rudeness should offend, he attacks her boldly, catches her in his arms, and being all in a flame how is it possible for her to escape the contagion!—You will find

by adopting some such method the fair nymph will be more convinc'd of the ardency of your love in one day than all the half-smother'd sighs, downcast eyes and sheepish looks will be able to persuade her to in seven years—be advis'd, leave your timidity, and you will then deserve to meet with as good success as was the fortune of

your sincere friend,

GEORGE DERVILLE.

L. E. T.

LETTER III.

CAPTAIN BRYDONE,

TO

CAPTAIN TOWNSEND.

LONDON is a most delightful place, Jack, and finely calculated for the man of pleasure—no wonder then if I preferred a trip to the metropolis to following you into Yorkshire, it may be a very pleasant county, and doubtless has its share of rural sports; but what are they when put in competition with the ever-variegating scene of pleasures which may be enjoyed
in

in this gay city?—here every wish may be supplied, and every sensation gratified—bring but plenty of cash and the choicest productions of art and nature are at your command—and money I fancy you will find a necessary acquisition, in every place, for the attainment of the most indifferent of either—So great an advocate am I for it that I sincerely repine at not being stationed in its vicinity, and as I don't believe one single man in the regiment would be under better discipline for my being with you I shall remain here as long as possible.

It was with some compunction I left S——, for, upon my soul, Lucy
is

is a sweet girl; but there began to be too visible an appearance of our connection to make it altogether commendable to remain any longer—the encrease of her size would have subjected me to interrogatories that I should have been puzzled to answer either to the satisfaction of myself, or any of the parties concerned.

This affair has almost led me to be of opinion that the value of possession imperceptibly arises in proportion to the difficulty of obtaining it, for I never experienced half the regret at shaking off an intrigue, nor had I ever half the trouble to commence one—I till then had found the girls, sitting
 .. aside

aside a few coquettish airs, as willing as myself; but it is my firm belief now, that had it not been for my connection with the old woman I ne- should have accomplished my designs; by an apparent fondness for her I had admittance when I thought proper, and as there are times in which the most steady adherents of virtue are left unguarded, I was a constant attendant — In one of these moments caught I the lovely Lucy and conquer'd — From behaving in the most respectful manner and with the tenderest assiduity she became less shy, and I began to perceive I was in a fair way to make some impression on her strongly defended heart, and by
never

never taking the least liberty put her entirely off her guard—this serv'd a double purpose as it likewise kept me on good terms with the mother who was rather given to jealousy—One day the gentle nymph being soften'd into tenderness by a slight indisposition, I assum'd the privilege of paying greater attention than common, and had frequent opportunities of “breathing soft nonsense in the fair—
“one's ear;” to which she either had not spirits or inclination to shew the least displeasure—My inspiring genius whispered me, the moment was near that would fully repay the toils I had been at and the hours I had wasted—I felt an emulation within
that

that strongly assur'd me it was only to make the attack and victory was my own.

The vicar being from home I had plann'd to remain with his better part all night, not doubting but I should be able to steal to my Lucy's chamber before morning—when Fortune, who is always favourable to her enterprizing votaries, brought home the old gentleman—it was late—by a manœuvre his rival and I had before put in practice the family thought me gone home—I must be conceal'd somehow, and where so safe as in the daughter's room?—O gods! what a propitious thought!—I found her——

no matter how I found her—for after a confounded deal of kneeling, praying, swearing and lying,

—With short sighs, and murmuring reluctance,
The yielding fair one gave me perfect happiness.

Although I had always look'd on marriage as “the trick of priests to make men miserable, and women insolent,” and of course resolved never to be subjected to it; yet, to quiet Lucy's tears, I promised faithfully to have her—with one excuse or other I baffled her off from time to time, and by that means kept her subject to my will, lest I should fly from my word, till at last I found I must either comply or run the hazard
of

of being called to an account if I remained much longer.

Having put every thing in order for my departure I went with a view of taking leave in form, pleaded an express from the general, and promised to return the first moment it was in my power—Sighs, sobs, and a flood of tears followed the first intimation—this being what I expected, I was ready prepar'd to sooth her with the most endearing language, which would have answered the end tolerably well, when it unluckily popp'd into her head that she might as well accompany me—reasonable enough to be sure—but happening to run counter
with

with my intentions, it was no easy matter to persuade me to her way of thinking—this proved a point of altercation for some time, but finding I was inflexible, she then entreated I would have the ceremony performed before I left her, fearing it would be impossible to conceal her situation any longer, and dreading the just resentment of her family should it be discovered—I made many protestations of my willingness to oblige her, but swore it was impossible to delay half an hour; however she might say we had been privately married and the first moment I saw her again should make her lawfully mine.—With a few tender caresses, some oaths of con-

stancy, and promises of a speedy return, her tears somewhat subsided, yet she remain'd too much affected to attend my taking leave of the family, which I accomplished in a hasty manner, being apprehensive of a second lecture from the old fool—but from that I escap'd tolerably well, having only a few significant looks it was not for my interest to understand—stepping therefore into a post-chaise I left the old parson to make the best of his wife and daughter, with a full determination never intentionally to fall in the way of either of them again.

On my arrival in town I was greatly surprized at finding my old friend,
Derville,

Derville, was married, and to one of the finest women I think I ever saw; he is no way altered in his disposition but as lively and gay as ever—received me with the greatest cordiality; introduced me to his Lady, with the recommendation of my being his particular friend; and insisted on my making his house my home while I remained in town—that, however, I did not think proper to accept, for pleasure being my sole business in London, I will not run the hazard of subjecting myself to the least restraint, which might have been the consequence of residing in the house, and I can now either visit him or let it alone as best suits my conveniency.

At present I have not met with any thing worth notice but live in hopes I shall not remain long idle, and the particulars of which you may depend on having as I do not intend to be the first in breaking our contract of communication; with wishing you success in every pursuit, I shall conclude for the present,

your's, as usual,

FRANK BRYDONE.

LET.

LETTER IV.

SIR THOMAS CHARLTON,

TO

LORD DERVILLE.

YES, Derville, I rejoice at your felicity, and hope it may continue as permanent and lasting as if you had been united with all that reciprocal tenderness and affection which I think necessary to constitute conjugal happiness.—So far from suspecting that you will change your note, I think there is every reason to believe the contrary—bless'd, by your

D 3

own

own account, with a most affable partner, that endeavours to render herself agreeable, and an independency that makes it unnecessary to become the dependant of a minister or slave of party; in short, without the least circumstance to give one moment's uneasiness—indeed I am almost induced to envy you the prospect, it being greater than you deserve—yet by pursuing that line of conduct you have at present adopted, it will be some atonement for your past failings, and render you in part worthy those blessings you now possess;—but what offence has Charlton-Place committed that should subject it to your ridicule? I can remember the time when the
gay

gay Derville, without having the idea of dying a batchelor, or turning hermit, was as fond of rambling in its woods, as the present inhabitant; who would think himself happy to be honoured again with thy company, whether it was to be satisfied respecting the improvement of the rookery, or any other motive whatever.

From what part of my conduct have you drawn your inference that I inculcate notions too romantic to meet with a female calculated to insure me happiness? or why do you suppose me so weak of soul as to be ashamed to acknowledge I feel the superiority of a female's virtues?—Al-

MEMOIRS OF

though I do not approve of following your advice, yet I should think myself below contempt was I that ridiculous being you are pleased to picture.—I believe my thoughts on taking a companion for life are of a more refined nature than what are generally imbibed, as I could wish the person allotted for my partner should possess an equal, if not a superior attachment, which might influence her, when a wife, to nourish that conquest her charms had made ; but as it is almost impossible to be convinc'd in this point, custom obliging them to conceal it, even when it is the case, I shall rest satisfied in meeting with a lady whose disposition

is

is distinguished for delicacy of manner and refinement, of sentiment—those qualifications answering every purpose; for such a one consenting to accept your hand gives a tacit acknowledgment her heart is already resigned, and as a proof there is little need of flying to the clouds for a mistress, I can name one which even you must confess possesses those acquisitions in the fullest sense.

As it would be ungenerous to take advantage of an inadvertant promise, I acquit you of that you made in your last; the sooner because I think your assistance necessary, and mean to request it; but first wish you to know
the

the value, and how far you are interested in its success.—Can you then renew the promise of assistance, after being informed that from respect to the sister I cherished the brother's acquaintance, that her virtues made me love his foibles, and that while I boasted a friendship for Lord Der-ville, my heart silently adored the superior attractions of Lady Ann.

My honour, George, hitherto obliged me to keep the secret close lock'd in my breast, for as my father, from his unhappy attachment to gaming, had left the family estate greatly embarrassed, I could not think of seducing her affections, or enticing her

her to a situation so far beneath what she is intitled to expect—but yesterday my ever-careful mother told me she requested my company for about half an hour in her room, where I no sooner attended than she began nearly to the following purpose.

“ My dear child, being thoroughly
“ convinced of your prudence, I
“ cannot bear to see you live in this
“ straitened manner any longer—you
“ are now of an age that it is ne-
“ cessary to think of making some
“ figure in life, and as it is uncertain
“ how long I may remain with you,
“ I hold it my duty to make you as
“ happy as I can, and therefore to
“ prevent

“ prevent all fear of embarrassing
“ yourself by appearing in the world,
“ or making yourself happy with the
“ person of your choice, there is the
“ sum to pay off the remaining mort-
“ gage—you should have had it
“ sooner, but I kept it as a reserve
“ least you might follow your father’s
“ extravagance, and too late be con-
“ vinc’d of your folly.

“ Finding, after fruitless trials,
“ that neither the affection for a wife,
“ nor tenderness of a parent could
“ prevent him from pursuing his
“ ruin, it was my duty to prevent
“ my child from being a beggar;
“ and as it pleased heaven to call Sir
“ Thomas

“ Thomas from a life of dissipation,
“ before he had totally involved his
“ estate, I have now the satisfaction
“ of having it in my power to re-
“ trieve it from all burthens.

“ I will not be thank'd, my love;
“ it was to please myself I did it,
“ and your constant duty, tender-
“ ness and affection has amply re-
“ paid my care—live and enjoy it;
“ and if your affections are engag'd,
“ let me, 'ere I die, have the plea-
“ sure to see you happily united, for
“ from your prudence I cannot doubt
“ her worthiness be who she may;
“ and then as the greatest blessing I
“ can wish you shall I continual pray
“ that

“that the Almighty may reward your
“duty by letting you experience the
“same comforts from your offspring
“as I have enjoyed with you.”

If then, my Lord, you think my
alliance is not totally beneath the no-
tice of your family, I will endeavour
to render myself agreeable to Lady
Ann, as that is a circumstance ac-
tually necessary to complete the hap-
piness of

your's sincerely,

THOMAS CHARLTON.

L.E.T.

LETTER V.

CHARLOTTE MARNSDOWN,

TO

LADY ARABELLA SPENCER.

I HOPE my dear Lady Derville will excuse her Charlotte's long delay in writing, nor attribute it to a want of respect—There has been a kind of revolution since I got home, which induc'd me to postpone sending until I had it in my power to give you some satisfactory account of a change that will greatly surprise you, it being no less

less than my having rejected Smith, and given my consent to Buckle.

What occasioned such an alteration you will naturally be inclined to enquire, therefore I'll send the whole transaction, though I'm afraid it will not meet your approbation—A description of the parties is superfluous to you who are so well acquainted with them both—yet something must be said of their dispositions to enable me to proceed with my tale.

Smith, whose understanding and generosity no one will attempt to dispute, frequently rendered himself disagreeable by his taciturnity—we have
been

been many an hour together and he has scarcely opened his lips ; while Buckle, from a gaiety of manner and lively turn of mind, has always a something to amuse—trifling as it may be it certainly exceeds dulness—thus far I can produce your advise as an excuse—yet I confess being fully convinc'd of Smith's honour and integrity I gave him the preference, and on Sunday evening I even went so far as to assure him that if he got my mama's consent mine should follow.

He waited on her the next day, and from a conscientiousness of principle, entered into the nicest minutiae of his affairs, which did not prove so

affluent as we had always considered them; she desired him to call again in the course of a day or two and he should then have her answer.—Buckle had prevail'd on his friends to come on the same business—his fortune being more than six times Smith's, and the families having been intimate for some years, no wonder that she acceded to their proposals with pleasure.

After they were all gone, and we left entirely by ourselves, she acquainted me with the motives for their several visits—enlarged on the danger I should run of being reduc'd to poverty by a connexion with Smith, (though she acknowledged he had an
excellent

excellent character) and enumerated the many advantages I should reap by an alliance with Buckle; who, notwithstanding his being tinctured with the follies of the age, she did not doubt would make me very happy—Her arguments were so strongly urg'd that I at length consented to act in contradiction to my sentiments, and, from her persuasion, promised to accept her choice and to reject my own the next time I saw him.

He came in the evening and observing something to be the matter, for I could not totally conceal it, he gave me an opportunity, by his enquiry into the cause, to give him his

denial—he strongly entreated to know what had occasioned his meeting with my disapprobation, but having promised my mama it should appear to be an act of my own, I only told him there was another person whom I preferred—however he would not leave me until I partly consented to meet him on the Thursday, which I thought most prudent not to comply with; the next day he sent me a letter which I have copied for you perusal.

“ Miss Marnsdown,

“ AFTER fruitlessly waiting for
“ the completion of your promise, I
“ concluded that you remained in the
“ same mind I left you on Monday
“ evening

“ evening, therefore have I taken
 “ this liberty to entreat you will
 “ favour me with thy reason for such
 “ a sudden change! — yes, my dear
 “ Charlotte, I must say sudden change,
 “ for either my senses deceived me,
 “ or the preceding night you gave
 “ me permission to think that pro-
 “ vided I could gain Mrs. Marris-
 “ down’s consent, I was secure of the
 “ preference in your esteem — what
 “ then have I committed that in one
 “ short day you should plunge me
 “ from the prospect of celestial bliss
 “ to black despair! — let me, I conjure
 “ you, know my offence! — how cruel
 “ have you been in trifling with a
 “ heart you must be sensible was en-

“ tirely devoted to your pleasure,
“ and whose greatest misery in this
“ life, I am certain, will arise from
“ being too steady in its attachments ;
“ would to heaven it was more vola-
“ tile, as then I should have some
“ hopes of that peace being again
“ restor’d which your refusal has
“ so effectually deprived me—yet I
“ will not complain, for, by my eter-
“ nal hopes, although I could, with
“ less regret, have bid adieu to the
“ world and all its transitory joys, I
“ prize your felicity above every other
“ consideration—may you be united
“ to the man of your heart (mine
“ sickens at the loss of hope) and if
“ he loves with half that sincerity I
“ ever

“ ever must, you will be secure of
 “ happiness; and that you may live
 “ in one continued round of pleasures
 “ till from the decay of nature you
 “ must naturally expect to part, is
 “ the sincere wish of the now most
 “ unhappy

“ B. SMITH.”

I return'd no answer, for in truth
 I knew not what to say, but have in-
 dustriously avoided him ever since,
 fearful I should find myself too much
 interested in his favour—My mama
 and Buckle both appear suspicious of
 something of that kind, and have
 teased me till I named the day, which
 is Saturday fortnight, when I hope

E 4 my

my dearest Bella, will favour me with her and Lord Derville's company—should he hesitate tell him I will not take any denial—but I know if you request it he'll not refuse, and I shall think you very unkind not to oblige me.

Poor Smith! I wish him happy—wish I was at liberty to tell him so!—I hope he will meet with some girl whom he may gladly prefer to Charlotte, and that she may be less whimsical, not so easily bias'd, and more worthy his deserts.

On my first arrival I was fairly beset by Willmore and your whole train
of

of admirers, who had imagined they were sure of finding you with me, but when I told them you was married and that I had been to attend the nuptials they made a strange ado about your having given them the slip; however I held forth Lord Derville as so much their superior that their murmurings quickly subsided—should, therefore, his lordship attempt to frame any excuse to avoid complying with my request, tell him he is bound in gratitude to make me at least that return for the high commendations I have given him, besides he will have an opportunity to convince our country gentlemen that his Arabella had some taste, and knew
when

when she met a person deserving her notice—use this or any other argument in case he wants to prove refractory, so you at last persuade him to accept of this invitation, and in so doing confer an everlasting obligation on her who, in every station of life, shall be proud to subscribe herself

your truly affectionate,

C. MARNSDOWN.

LET.

LETTER V.

LORD DERVILLE,

TO

SIR THOMAS CHARLTON.

UPON my word, Charlton, I could not have thought you had such a penetrating genius—yes, you are quite right; it is impossible for me to deny that Lady Ann is one of the completest women of the age—why she's the exact counterpoise of her brother—you may search some time before you find a pair to equal them. Did you observe her eyes?—black as a sloe—

a floe—and then her cheeks, Tom, such red and white—but for lips, O Gods! what ambrosial dew might be sipt from such an inviting pair—I must not go any further, lest I get into raptures myself, forget she's my sister, and cut your throat for thinking of her.

But Mr. Sincerity, are you sure you have not been tampering with the poor girl's heart already?—are you positive now that you never directly or indirectly endeavoured to enveigle yourself into her affections, and pluming yourself on your security in that quarter, mean to make the consent of the family a mere matter of form?

form?—if I find it so, all thy fine projects shall be confuted my life on it.

Instead of looking on your acquitting me of my promise as an act of honour and generosity, I rather am led to believe it originated from self-conceit, and that you supposed yourself of such consequence that I dared not refuse my assistance at any rate; however I would have you to understand, Sir, that although I may have thought myself honoured by your friendship, it was no argument that I should approve of your alliance; the man who meets with my concurrence must possess many requisites
that

that most of my companions are deficient in, and be a novice in those which they are complete masters—but what do you apply to me for? the girl has got a father, and I can't see where that is the case, what business a brother has to interfere—if I had, Sir Thomas Charlton might perhaps in the end have no great reason to be pleased—for I should be for tacking them together without any further ceremony.

Not to make any great professions, or fine promises, I will positively give you all the assistance in my power; that is, provided you can't help yourself—for I peremptorily reject
being

being a negociator—but, if after trying old furly, you should be refused, and the lady will not be persuaded to listen to your vows without his approbation, I'll help you to carry her to Charlton-place with all my heart, where being once safely lodg'd, I defy all the conjurors, or ingenuity of the present race to recover her back.

I ever honoured Lady Charlton as the tenderest of parents and best of women—her benevolence and sympathetic feelings were always too conspicuous to permit the most extravagant proof of parental affection to be a matter of surprize—her generosity

to

to you therefore appears little more than what might have been expected from one of such expanded sentiments—I congratulate you on the difference such an act must have made in your fortune, though at all times I should have thought the alliance an honour, nor do I believe you run the hazard of meeting a repulse in any quarter—therefore, my boy, come to town, and let my house be the scene of action—you must expect her to play off some of her squeamish tricks at first, for curse me if I don't think she's half a prude; but never mind that, only be ruled by me, and I'll be bound to carry you through.

I had

I had a very great mind to begin the attack myself, and certainly should have made an attempt before now, had I not perhaps luckily recollected how vastly delicate you are in matters of this kind; but if you make any long delay I shall not be able to hold out, for having been so long clear of mischief I long to be about something, and she being so conveniently situated in the same house is a great temptation.

Now I think I should be able to do you a very singular piece of service in founding her affections and letting you into the secret; but I suppose I should hurt your fine feel-

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ings, and be call'd a meddling puppy for my pains—aye! you sentimental souls love trouble—I query, if you were dying for each other, and shut up together, whether you would not take six months to disclose the secret; there's a sweet pair of you! and yet I must wish you success because it will be a pleasure to

your's sincerely,

DERVILLE.

L E T.

LETTER VII.

LADY DERVILLE,

TO

CHARLOTTE MARNSDOWN.

IT is with the greatest sincerity, my dear Charlotte, that I regret your hazarding the loss of happiness, which I am fearful will be the consequence of your precipitate determination—Surely had Mrs. Marnsdown been acquainted with the true state of your heart she would never have us'd such compulsion—yes, my dear, entreaties and persuasions are the strongest that

can be oppos'd to a grateful mind—
You say, “Poor Smith! I pity him,”
so do I, yet I wish I may not have
occasion to repeat, poor Charlotte!
she deserves my pity most—Lord Der-
ville I own, when we were married,
was quite indifferent to me, but then
so was every one beside, which is more
than you can say—therefore you can-
not draw any just inference from
thence that your indifference may
likewise ripen into esteem, because
that esteem is already plac'd on an-
other—by endeavouring to conceal it
you plainly speak the violence you
have done to yourself in this com-
pliance—I cannot help saying, altho'
he has got your consent, that I am
sorry

sorry my Charlotte is to be a willing sacrifice to such a wretch, whose own dear, sweet person has ever been the only object of his adoration, and his fondness for you will be similar to what I should feel was I possess'd of the true Venus de Medicis, merely to have the pleasure of boasting that such a master-piece of perfection was my property—we shall have the little puppy bring you to town and exhibit you at every public place, as the only means of publishing his own consequence—You must not be offended with me, my love ; for I have no patience while I think of your having consented to such a preposterous union, therefore I'll drop the subject

least I should take greater liberties than you could pardon.

Since you return'd into the country we have got a visitor, at least I may call him so, for notwithstanding he does not reside in the house he is seldom absent—he is one of Lord Derville's old companions, who introduced him to me as his particular friend, by the name of Brydone—he is a captain in the army, but has left his regiment in Yorkshire for the sake of spending a few months in town, which my Lord endeavours to render as agreeable as possible by continually engaging us in different parties — and at which employment I don't believe

lieve there is his equal in the whole kingdom.

How very unfortunate it was that I had not detain'd you here a little longer, as I think this very identical captain would certainly have been the means of preventing you from disposing of yourself to such disadvantage—for, I am sure, Buckle could not stand any chance was you acquainted with this Brydone; as, in addition to the handsomest figure you ever beheld, he has an affability that ingratiates him into the good graces of all he comes near, and a vivacity that renders him the life and soul of every society—to such a man

F 4

should

should I be happy to see my sweet friend united !

I cannot, my dear, at any rate, comply with your invitation — not from my dislike to your intended, I assure you, for such a trifle as that would have but little weight when put in competition with my friendship for you and the knowledge of his having met with your approbation, but I am sensible it would be very disagreeable for Lord Derville to leave his friend, they not having been together for some time--I therefore hope you will kindly dispense with my company, and not impute my non-compliance to any disrespect ;
for

for believe me, my Charlotte, I still retain as lively a sense of our friendship as when we first entered into the pleasing bonds of amity, nor know I a circumstance that would give me a more heart-felt sorrow than the loss of thee!

When you have duly considered my motive for declining the happiness I should enjoy in granting your request, I flatter myself you will not withhold your forgiveness; placing therefore an entire confidence in your good-nature to be excused I must take my leave, being engaged with Lord Derville, Lady Ann, and the Captain, to the opera, whom I shall keep waiting

ing if I delay any longer than just to assure you I sincerely wish I may be deceived in my conjectures of Buckle, but that his understanding may be so far enlightened as to be sensible of thy virtues, and then it will be impossible for him not to endeavour to make you as happy as can be wished by

your sincere friend,

ARABELLA DERVILLE.

LET.

LETTER VIII.

CAPTAIN BRYDONE,

TO

CAPTAIN TOWNSEND.

THE longer I remain in this gay city, Townsend, the more regret, I find by experience, shall I feel at quitting of it—nay I begin to wish I had not come at all—for I have rush'd into a worse dilemma than ever I did before—I fancy I was born under the influence of Venus, and doom'd to go through all the various vicissitudes attendant on Love—for no
pastime

pastime gives me satisfaction unless there is woman in it—and may I be confounded if ever I feel any vexation but what woman is the occasion of—all else is a mere matter of indifference—and as Randolph says,

I long not for the cherries on the tree,
So much as those that on a lip I see;
And more affection bear I to the rose,
That on a cheek, than in a garden grows.

My unlucky stars have, at length, plac'd me in a blessed situation—they must needs influence me to come to town and lead me to the very house where Cupid has taken up his abode, who, in a malicious vein, plays off his keenest darts from Lady Derville's eyes,

eyes, and the three graces, to complete the business, have combin'd in her person to counteract every effort I make—in short I am most desperately in love with her—reason, friendship, and the difficulty of obtaining her have been entirely borne away by this one consideration, that she is likewise so with me—numberless little incidents which females take no pains to conceal have frequently declared her sentiment—Derville is too much the man of fashion to pay any great attention to his wife, which neglect in him allows me many opportunities of exercising my assiduity unnoticed, and I am sure to have the smallest degree of politeness received with the highest

highest encomiums—this gave me encouragement to proceed until I had wrought myself to such a pitch it was impossible to retract.

Fearful, however, lest I should meet a defeat I resolv'd first to undermine the little affection I perceiv'd she had for him, by alarming her with his inconstancy—this I thought I had in my power to effect, without much trouble, from the following circumstance—some time ago he took a girl from her friends, and had her in keeping until just before his marriage; he acquainted me with the whole affair from the very beginning, and the difficulty he had to prevail on her to
accept

accept of a maintenance, being quite a heroine, despising all worldly matters for the sweets of love—a Sir Thomas Charlton was at last call'd in as a mediator, who, from knowing the family prevail'd on her to accept his offer, and every thing was quietly adjusted—they endeavoured to persuade her to retire into the country, which she peremptorily refused, vowing she would end her days in the house he had taken for her—this girl Derville has often mentioned to me, hinting his wishes to see her married, thinking, I suppose, to make me the dupe for his cast off—for which contempt I owe him some return—having learnt her place of residence I resolved

to

to try if there was no method of drawing her in for an accomplice—being pretty well assur'd that revenge is the darling attribute of a slighted female's breast.

After a few fruitless endeavours I acquir'd admission into her company, and by taking proper opportunities to enveigh against his infidelity presently re-illumin'd the dying embers of her passion, awaken'd all the woman in her breast, and soon found her ripe for retaliation ; which I promised she should have by making him as miserable as herself provided she would submit to act entirely according to my direction.

As

As yet I have not been enabled to reap any advantage from new ally, rather choosing to try the strength of the enemy by throwing out some oblique hints, and if I find them produce any good effect, to bring up my whole force and make a bold attack at once—I am aware of the danger of permitting too much intercourse betwixt the ladies, as the matter might then appear in a different light to what I wish it, and I be foil'd at my own weapons—at present things are in a flattering train and I have little doubt of success.

Having once completed my designs, I will be as assiduous to keep them

friends as I am now to promote a slight variance—and so well am I acquainted with Derville's disposition, that if I can but draw her to insinuate her suspicions, he will give sufficient room to suppose it all a fact—being above dissimulation himself he is too proud to pay attention to ambiguous hints—to place an entire confidence, and frankly tell him your thoughts, I know no man more ready to acknowledge an error, or willing to make atonement—but if he once finds out you harbour a suspicion and wish to pry into his actions for confirmation, he will take a delight in perplexing and leave but little room to doubt his being guilty—out of which

which peculiarity of temper I hope to inspire her with jealousy and him indifference, and then may Venus crown me with the rich reward, far exceeding what she gave to her favourite Paris in the beauties of the Grecian dame!—Farewell! enjoy life while you can! shall ever be the invariable motto of

your's, as usual,

FRANK BRYDONE.

LETTER IX.

LADY ANN DERVILLE,

T O

LADY BETTY PLOMER.

SO much am I at a loss for my dear Lady Betty, that to write to her is 'one of my chiefest delights, and which was I embrace every time my mind is so given, soon should I weary out her patience with my frivolous epistles; therefore I keep it as a reserve, sure when nothing else will give me satisfaction I shall certainly find it in that,
and

and from my so seldom intruding she will naturally suppose I am not very unhappily situated — another reason for my remissness is, that we are so continually in company it is with the utmost difficulty I can steal an hour to myself, as my brother and his Lady always contrive to make me of their parties, which in general are of the liveliest kind, for in addition to their own vivacity is a Captain Brydone, one of George's old companions, whose sprightly turn exceeds all I ever saw—however, my dear, it is not the want of agreeable amusement that has been the occasion of this letter, but rather to give you an intimation of an occurrence which your friendship en-

titles you to be acquainted with being of infinite concern to me—know then, to comprize it all in one short sentence, Sir Thomas Charlton is in town, has declar'd himself your Nancy's admirer, and made her a tender of his hand and heart.

Whether it was contriv'd on purpose I can't tell, but I was left at home by myself—a thing I don't recollect had happened before since I have been in town—Sir Thomas soon join'd me, enquir'd after the family, surpriz'd at my being alone, and a good deal more of such chit-chat pass'd between us; but he at length chang'd the subject, and taking me
by

by the hand, began nearly to this purpose :

“ My dear Lady Ann, such an opportunity as this being difficult to attain can you indulge me with your attention for a few moments to a subject that nearly concerns my future peace.”

“ Sir Thomas !——I am always happy to——any thing in my power, “ Sir Thomas !”——or some such simple reply did I make, for the tone and manner which accompanied his words really alarm'd me, and I was all in a tremble—of which he luckily took no notice but proceeded.

G 4

“ From

“ From my long intimacy, madam,
“ it was impossible I should be a
“ stranger to those perfections that
“ have ever dignified you beyond
“ most of your sex; my heart has
“ long confess’d their power, and
“ been their silent adorer—I was proud
“ of the title of friend, and it was
“ not without some difficulty I pre-
“ vail’d on myself to this, lest my
“ ambition in attempting to be more
“ should deprive me of that treasure
“ I am now permitted to enjoy—I am
“ sensible of your high desert and my
“ own unworthiness; yet fate bids me
“ look up to you for happiness—I
“ have not a heart to offer you, for
“ that you have long been in posses-
“ sion

" sion of—I boast not titles, nor did
 " I ever wish for but one, and that's
 " in thy power to bestow—I cannot
 " deal out my affection in fine-spun
 " speeches, being a novice in the art
 " of love, and a stranger to flattery ;
 " but if that conduct I have pursued
 " while honoured with your friend-
 " ship has merited a continuation, let
 " me entreat you to let it be in a
 " dearer character, nor refuse to the
 " integrity of the lover the blessing
 " you bestow'd on the attention of
 " the friend."

" This, Sir Thomas, is a language
 " so widely different from what I could
 " ever have expected that——"

" You

“ You must forgive!—must, did I
“ say?—pardon my freedom—but
“ know, dearest Lady, ’ere you make
“ a reply, that this address proceeds
“ not from the idle resolve of the mo-
“ ment, but from a long and rooted
“ affection, therefore on thy decree
“ depends the happiness or misery of
“ my future life.”

Much more past which I cannot
think of repeating, even to you, lest
you should condemn me for being
too forward—let it suffice that I gave
him no reason to complain of my
cruelty—Why should I disguise the
sentiments of my heart, or attempt
to deny a virtuous preference—his
known

'known integrity demanded I should treat him with openness and candour, and in behaving otherwise I should have done an injustice to his character and a violence to my own disposition.

Yet, my dear, no sooner did our company come home, than this modest, this unassuming Sir Thomas Charlton proclaim'd the whole affair and boasted his success—George rallied me a little at first, but Sir Thomas taking it up he fell upon him without mercy, though as he said himself, in the height of good-nature, and concluded by assuring him he was thoroughly satisfied with his intended brother.

Was

Was I but blest'd with your presence I should not have a single wish left to make my felicity complete—I should then enjoy a perfect happiness—but that being more than can be expected in this transitory life, I must for the present rest myself contented at your absence, though I still am, and ever shall be,

your sincere friend,

ANN DERVILLE.

LET.

LETTER X.

LADY DERVILLE,

TO

MRS. BUCKLE.

BY this time I suppose, Charlotte, I may tender you my compliments and wishes on having commenced Mrs. Buckle, and from my love to you he has my congratulations likewise—but I hope our sentiments are too well known to each other to need any of this kind of parade, as it is impossible for you to be happier than my desires would make you.

When

When I wrote last I was blith as a bird, without an idea to vex or disturb me; but now am I perplex'd with doubt and uncertainty — confidence chides my credulity, and yet apprehension bears down all before it—I have heard, Charlotte; but it can never be, nor will I believe it—and yet some circumstances bear a strong resemblance to truth—let me then have your opinion, do you think Lord Derville so void of principle as not only to have been the very person who seduced your sister, but that he actually visits her now? or is it possible she can be so lost to shame, as to submit, in defiance to the censure of the world, to be supported by him
a state

a state of affluence?—and yet all this have I been told, and even had her carriage pointed out to me.—I have no difference in his behaviour to complain of, but who knows how long he may remain so—or perhaps while he treats his wife with politeness, his mistress has his affections—his civility to me may arise from compulsion, while his whole soul may be engrossed in searching opportunities to adore her—were it not for his interest I most likely should be cast aside, and he publicly proclaim the object of his choice—Oh! my sweet friend, what a distressing idea!—although I never experienced any violence of love for him, yet he
had

had endear'd himself by a steady and uniform behaviour—Heavens! how deceitful is man!—I could never have paid the least attention had I heard it from any other than his bosom friend—he made Capt. Brydone his confidant, who struck with the injustice of my being so imposed upon, with tears in his eyes acquainted me with the whole affair, and has kindly offered his service to assist me in exposing him to his own folly.—Write to me, Charlotte, advise me how to act, for at present I am so agitated betwixt the contending passions of hope and fear, that I cannot come to any determination. Adieu!

ARABELLA DERVILLE.

LETTER XI.

CAPTAIN BRYDONE,

TO

CAPTAIN TOWNSEND.

He that is robb'd, not wanting what is stol'n,
Let him not know't, and he's not robb'd at all.

AN excellent text, Townsend, to prove Lord Derville will not be injured in my taking a sample of his superabundant delicacies—know it he shall not, unless he gets peeping where he has no business, and to want my stolen pleasures while he possesses such a treasure is impossible—Methinks I hear you say, I talk as if the

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H

game

game was won—it is as good, you rogue—for madam is quite in a fret, with an implicit faith in me, and acts entirely under my direction. I have with some little difficulty fairly persuaded her that he keeps Miss Marnsdown—protested violently he had entrusted me with the secret; and, as a corroborating circumstance, took her to see an elegant vis-a-vis, which I affirmed he had purchased for her use; and afterwards contriv'd to let her see my little agent in it, having hired it of the coach maker for that purpose—this was a master-stroke, my boy, as it rivetted her confidence, and put my veracity beyond a doubt.

It

It was with some difficulty I prevail'd upon her to give up a desire of an interview, as the ladies I find were formerly intimate.—Now though Miss Marnsdown is at present all I can wish, and ready to undertake whatever I advise, yet I don't think it prudent to trust them together, for were they left to themselves, resentment might subside, and affection for the once lov'd object preponderate, which would put a period to all my hopes at once.

I have taken care to put it out of her power to plead being a stranger to my passion, having frequently, together with many other little insinua-

H 2

ations,

ations, assured her that nothing but my superior attachment to her could have seduced me to betray the secrets of my friend; that, shock'd at the abuse of such perfection, my heart forcibly pleaded her cause, and that I should have held myself equally criminal had I still encouraged his ingratitude.

Flattery, tinctured with sentiment, is of too powerful a nature for any woman to withstand, and I now only wait a proper opportunity to give a convincing proof of it, being fully determined, whenever that occurs, to make a bold push, and like a true son of Venus, either enjoy the glorious

rious conquest, or meet a total discomfiture.—Soon you may expect to hear the consequence of my enterprise, as it is a very easy matter for us to be alone, the rest of them are too much engaged with Sir Thomas Charlton, who has come to town on purpose to make an offer to Derville's sister, which is well received on all sides, and the match, I take it, will soon be concluded on.

This Charlton, Jack, is the very person you may remember I was suspicious of on my first acquaintance with Lucy—he prides himself on his honour and integrity, and is very severe upon those who are guilty of

H 3

a breach

a breach of them.—Derville very often rallies him upon his solidity, yet he possesses a very high esteem and makes him his confidant in every thing he does.

Was it not for his being pretty much engaged in his own affairs with Lady Ann, I should be very happy to get him into the country again, as I am certain he is master of more penetration than would be of service to my cause; for as it is, I have caught him observing Lady Derville's behaviour to me, but, however, his time is at present too much taken up for me to apprehend any danger of a discovery, and I am too well apprized

apprized of the hazard of making long delays, to put it in his power hereafter.

But hast thou no news?—never a single line? I tell you what, my friend, I shall begin to grow suspicious that you don't deal fairly by me, and if so, adieu to all correspondence with,

your's, as usual,

F. BRYDONE.

H 4

LET-

LETTER XII.

MRS. BUCKLE,

TO

LADY DERVILLE.

SURELY, my dear Lady Derville cannot be so much an enemy to her own peace and quiet as to perplex herself with such idle suspicions—take my word for it, my dear, that Brydone is no friend of yours, but has some deep design which he means to accomplish by your credulity.—You acknowledge his Lordship still maintains that uniformity of behaviour
by

by which he had endear'd himself, and that he has never given you any visible cause to doubt his sincerity; can you then be so weak, I must say so truly ridiculous, to make yourself uneasy at an idle story without any reasonable foundation; propagated by an acknowledged rake with a deceitful countenance, and whose only convincing proof was a carriage that might as well belong to any other person as my poor unhappy sister, or made for any other Lord as Lord Derville—he told you it was for them, and you believed it—have a care, my dear friend, of paying too much credit to such reports—be cautious lest Lord Derville should hear of your
being

being so ready to believe any tale to his disadvantage, and that he has so little of your good opinion—I fear you would find it a fatal stroke to thy future happiness—nothing can be a greater stab to the nice feeling mind, than to be unjustly suspected by those they love—want of confidence has changed numberless dear friends to mortal enemies, and how many once-happy couples, through that alone, have become miserable; avoid it then as a precipice from which you are sure to fall—if Doubt has taken harbour in your breast, and you find it difficult to eradicate him from his assumed abode, open your heart to his Lordship, make him acquainted with

with all you have heard, and my life upon it you will reap more real advantage, even allowing it to be a fact, in such a reliance upon his honour, than in all the methods of opposition you can pursue—his generosity is acknowledged by all the world, and how inconsistent is it for you to suppose he would be less so to her he has ever treated with respect, veneration, and, notwithstanding what you have now taken in your head, the tenderest assiduity.

Let me hear, I beseech you, by the next post, that you are happy again in yourself; give your suspicions to the wind, and treat the officious
Brydone

Brydone with the contempt he merits. Happy should I be had I such honour and integrity to depend on that you have ; but we ought not to repine at what Fate has allotted us, and I hope I shall always maintain a sufficient resolution to endeavour to render that as easy as possible, which has fell to her, who is now obliged to subscribe herself,

your truly affectionate

CHARLOTTE BUCKLE.

LET-

LETTER XIII.

LADY DERVILLE,

TO

MRS. BUCKLE.

My dear Charlotte,

YOUR Letter is a far more convincing proof of the goodness of your own heart, than a just idea of my cause for suspicion—as I am now fully convinced of the baseness of Lord Derville; a recent circumstance, the particulars of which I have sent you, has put it beyond a doubt.

We

We all went to the play last night, and who should be in the opposite box but, I will not call her your sister, Miss Marnsdown—Sir Thomas Charlton soon espy'd her, and I observ'd whisper'd Lord Derville; when instantly guilt, yes, Charlotte, conscious guilt, flew in his face, and disconcerted him for the whole evening. You will hardly believe the alteration it made—instead of his usual gaiety he scarcely opened his lips during the performance, but appeared totally taken up with observing her—Sir Thomas attended Lady Ann and me home in the coach, and expected we were followed by his Lordship and Captain Brydone, but saw nothing of them.

them for near an hour and a half.— Judge, my love, what I felt during this interval—my pride was rous'd at this public neglect, for it was too plain what had detain'd him, and I had the greatest difficulty to prevent my uneasiness from being observ'd—at last in he came quite in high spirits; this was an insult I could not brook, therefore pleaded a pain in my head and retired.

Little rest had I the whole night, being chiefly spent with considering in what manner I should act, as I was fully determined not to put up with such contemptuous marks of indignity.

In

In the morning he assum'd that deceitful calmness he is always master of, and with all the tender complaisance, as though he had really been concern'd, hoped I had lost my last night's complaint.

“A complaint of that nature, my Lord, is not so easily got rid of.”

“I am sorry for it—I thought it had only been a slight head-ach, occasioned by the heat of the play-house, and that a night's rest would have set all well again.”

“A night's rest!—but whatever I suffer is of no consequence to you.”

“Why

“ Why so, my dear Lady?—I am
 “ sure I should be extremely unhappy
 “ to have any thing affect you.”

“ This palpable deceit, my Lord,
 “ is ridiculous — When once indif-
 “ ference has taken root, it is of too
 “ quick a growth to be long conceal’d,
 “ but is soon perceivable in defiance
 “ of all the art that may be us’d to
 “ gloss it over.”

“ Very true, madam; and was I
 “ maliciously inclin’d I should con-
 “ clude you had taken this oppor-
 “ tunity to convince me all art was
 “ unnecessary and held as too con-
 “ temptible for your notice.”

“Rather suppose your art is not sufficient to keep me in ignorance.”

“Upon my word, Lady Derville,
“I am entirely at a loss to comprehend your meaning—but in my
“opinion we had better drop the
“subject, as I cannot perceive we
“shall either gain any advantage by
“a continuation.”

“Was you, my Lord, as tenacious
“of disadvantage in all your actions,
“I presume you would find no true
“benefit in keeping a mistress.”

“I am quite of your way of thinking in that however, as I positively
“don’t

“ don’t imagine I should reap any ad-
 “ vantage whatever pleasure there
 “ might be in such a transaction.”

“ You may endeavour to make a
 “ jest of it, my Lord, but I am con-
 “ vinc’d of its being a fact—nor will
 “ you derive any great credit from
 “ such a procedure, notwithstanding
 “ the pomp you are pleas’d to support
 “ her in.”

“ By heaven’s, madam——”

“ Nay it is in vain to make a de-
 “ nial—I have long been acquainted
 “ with it, have seen the person, and
 “ come to a determinate resolution,

“ for think not, my Lord, I will sub-
“ mit to live a sharer in your esteem
“ with a prostitute.”

“ If, Lady Derville, you have so
“ little confidence in my honour, and
“ have meanly stoop’d to harbour
“ such vague suspicions, know I am
“ too proud of soul to convince you
“ of your error, and whatever may
“ be your resolutions they are alike
“ indifferent.”

“ This aggravation is beyond bear-
“ ing, and you may rest assur’d I shall
“ seek redress.”

“ As you think proper, madam.”

Now

Now, Charlotte, can you doubt the truth of his infidelity, or the justice of Captain Brydone's accusation? when he even himself does not deny it, but treated me and my wrongs with the highest contempt—what can I do?—it is impossible to think of continuing with him under such circumstances—I have so many different resolutions croud on my heated imagination that I cannot place a determination on any.

Suppose I was to wait on Henrietta, or have him watch'd there, and then by detecting him put it out of his power of denying it—after which to acquaint Sir William with my ill-

I.3

treatment

treatment and insist on a separation—yet why should I make him miserable! he thought it would have been for the happiness and advantage of his daughter, nor ever conceiv'd he was persuading her to an alliance with a person who would so soon treat her as an out-cast wretch beneath his notice, and leave her neglected for the arms of a wanton—I scarcely know what I write, therefore must conclude; pardon all errors, and believe me,

your sincere friend,

ARABELLA DERVILLE.

LET-

LETTER XIV.

CAPTAIN BRYDONE,

TO

CAPTAIN TOWNSEND.

Most noble Captain,

I HAVE the honour to inform you that after every necessary preparation was made for storming the garrison, the commander in chief thought fit to capitulate and I am now in actual possession of the town—or in other words, success has crown'd my wishes and Lady Derville's my own—one little manœuvre completed the business.

Finding

Finding her almost work'd up to my purpose I carefully watch'd every occurrence that was likely to keep her suspicions alive—it was propos'd to go to the play, I seconded it and offer'd to secure places—this was accepted—away flew I and prevail'd on Miss Marnsdown to attend in the opposite box—She was soon perceiv'd by the whole groupe—Lady Derville pouted and paid more attention to her and Derville than to the performance; he, as though he had been an accessory to the plot, was remarkably dull the whole evening, which I conceiv'd her ladyship would attribute to a cause that might prove of more essential service to me than all the rhetoric I could

could display in a twelvemonth, and to prevent it from losing any of the effect, as we were following them in his chariot, I requested him to stop at the St. James' Coffee-house, thinking it very probable that she would suspect we were in another quarter—After delaying about an hour I pretended to give over all thoughts of the person I wanted to see, and we proceeded home in tolerable spirits—I then found my scheme had taken beyond my most sanguine expectations, for her ladyship complained of a slight indisposition and retired almost as soon as we went in—I could plainly read in her countenance the violent agitation of her mind.

I call'd

I call'd as usual in the morning and found Derville alone quite in the dumps—I rallied him for some time, to no purpose, to find out how far matters had proceeded, as I doubted not being acquainted with the source from whence his dulness sprang—Sir Thomas Charlton coming in they agreed to take a ride—I declin'd being of the party, having other game in view—they soon left me, and I sent up name and requested to see her ladyship—I was presently admitted to her dressing room, where I found the gentle goddess almost drown'd in tears—she was full of complaints at his treatment—told me she had upbraided him with his infidelity and
that

that instead of denying it he had treated her in a very ludricous manner.

This was the long wish'd for moment and I was too sensible of its value to let it pass, therefore casting myself at her feet I declar'd the ardency of my passion in the most eloquent manner I was master of—her tongue refus'd its office, but her eyes spake a language a lover could not mistake; I gently press'd her hand, clasp'd her to my panting breast, and rov'd from one liberty to another till, in profusion of soul, she gave me all I ask'd—A few execrations at her own folly you know was natural to follow, but those
were

were soon quieted, by my making strong protestations of everlasting truth and fidelity, and a few hints of its being nothing more than retaliation upon the ingrate Derville—as we are all apt to look on that side of the question which suits our own purpose, no wonder that her ladyship was so inclin'd in this instance—I know it always was and ever will be the maxim with

your's, as usual,

FRANK BRYDONE.

L E T.

LETTER XV.

LADY DERVILLE,

TO

MRS. BUCKLE.

My dear Charlotte,

THE aggravation I continually experience from Lord Derville, will, in the end, deprive me of all patience; his indifference and carelessness of manner are beyond conception—notwithstanding the present disagreeable terms we are upon he makes no kind of difference in his behaviour, only carefully avoiding any private altercation

cation—takes part in every diversion as usual—is equally facetious in company, and appears perfectly at ease—indeed he seems to enjoy my unhappiness, which, in spite of all dissimulation, can plainly be discern'd—but it shall not long be so. I'll repay him scorn for scorn—I'll no longer be the quiet, easy, neglected, domestic wife, live in such a secluded line, nor deprive myself of enjoying those pastimes suitable to my rank.

I am resolv'd, in future, fashion, cards, attending company abroad and receiving them at home shall employ those hours that have been hitherto wasted in hopes of obtaining a life
of

of tranquility—he shall soon find the effects of his perfidy—yet how weak must I be ever to have expected constancy from one of his general character—vainly proud of my own consequence I despis'd the idea that his then changeableness would be productive of any after uneasiness—that part of his disposition you very justly intimated—but where is that honour, that generosity you endow'd him with in your last?—what was my treatment in attempting to place a confidence in that honour.

I was very particular in transmitting to you the whole conversation that you might be fully satisfied

fied I do not complain without a cause, nor wish to represent him worse than he really is.

As yet you have not answered my last—why don't you write?—to refuse me your advice, your assistance in my present situation is downright cruelty, and no way consistent with the amiable conduct and affable disposition that always shone forth in my lovely friend.

Sir Thomas Charlton leaves us tomorrow, and I find his lordship intends to accompany him, but how far, or for how long, I cannot pretend to say, as I have heard nothing
more

more of it than what has pass'd in general conversation, nor indeed do I expect to be acquainted with the particulars as that will be a condescension beneath his high spirit, and what I am not held worthy of—yet I can't say but if he does go without taking any kind of notice I shall be most terribly mortified.

I hope my Charlotte will forgive my perplexing and teasing her with my unhappiness, but where shall I pour my complaints if they are excluded her friendly breast—Let me, however, beseech you not to permit them to be any alloy to your peace and happiness, though from the con-

clusion of your last favour I am in some kind of doubt whether all is quite right with you, but if so, permit not mine to be an addition, as you have any regard for

your truly affectionate

ARABELLA DERVILLE.

LET.

LETTER XVI.

LADY ANN DERVILLE,

TO

LADY BETTY PLOMER.

AT length, my dear Plomer, I flatter myself that I shall have an opportunity of being once more with you, as my brother made no objection when I expressed a desire to return into the country, and the sooner I can accomplish it, the greater will be my satisfaction, for there is a strange alteration in this house—George and

K 2

my

my Lady having been at variance for some days past—he is very unhappy, though he seems to treat it with the utmost indifference and contempt, which meets with a similar return on her part.

Sir Thomas and I were sitting together the other evening in the drawing-room, when in he came, and threw himself into a chair—I was terribly alarmed, as was Sir Thomas, and begg'd to know the cause of his uneasiness—we offered to get some assistance, fearing he might be taken ill, but he refused having any—after sitting some little time he exclaimed out——

“ By

“ By heaven I cannot bear it !”

“ Bear what ? (replied Sir Thomas) why do you keep your complaint a secret ?”

“ O Tom ! I am miserable !—
“ what I always dreaded is come to
“ pass—Lady Derville has forsook
“ those engaging charms of the amiable companion, and assum’d the
“ supercilious airs of the overbearing
“ wife.”

“ I fancy you have forsaken the
“ plain road of good sense, and got
“ into the elaborate path of incoherencies, determined no one shall
“ be

“ be able to comprehend your sufferings.”

“ Take care you do no experience
 “ them—there’s that little vixen by
 “ your side will soon give you reason
 “ to complain—but you are not married yet—be rul’d by me—avoid
 “ the whole sex—they are like an
 “ April day, more storm than calm—
 “ the certain bane of a man’s peace
 “ and happiness.”

“ What have I done, George?—
 “ I’m sure I am unconscious of having
 “ committed any thing to offend
 “ you.”

“ My

“ My dear I believe you—you are
 “ a good girl, a very good girl, and
 “ I love you—so does Charlton, yet
 “ if he wishes his affection to con-
 “ tinue he must never marry.”

“ I really believe, Derville, you
 “ are mad—will you descend to com-
 “ mon sense and tell us what is the
 “ matter?”

“ The matter!—a mere trifle in
 “ the eyes of the world, but with
 “ me it is of the highest concern—
 “ Lady Derville and I have quar-
 “ rel’d, that’s all—but the conse-
 “ quence of which is we shall never
 “ be friends again.”

K 4

“ Ridi-

“ Ridiculous!—I shall soon hear
“ you tell another story—but what
“ tricks have you been at to offend
“ her?”

“ None, Charlton!—she has took
“ in her head I keep a mistress, and
“ refused me the liberty to deny it—
“ treated me in a manner contrary,
“ in my opinion, to what became
“ her character, and what I ought
“ to have received.”

“ There must be some mistake—
“ let me go and talk to your Lady.”

“ First, Sir Thomas, take a retro-
“ spect view of my conduct, and
“ answer

“ answer me this, has my behaviour,
 “ in any manner, been of that nature
 “ to encourage such a suspicion?”

“ Indeed I can’t say it has.”

“ Then I beg she may be left to her
 “ credulity—it must have come from
 “ report, or a whim of her own—in
 “ either case she deserves to suffer,
 “ for if it was report she certainly
 “ should have employed her own
 “ judgment, and not been led
 “ away she knew not why, and if
 “ it sprung from a capricious hu-
 “ mour to shew her consequence, let
 “ her enjoy the effect of it—It is
 “ not the product of the present
 “ moment

“ moment, having occur’d before
“ our ride this morning, but the
“ haughtiness of her carriage as I just
“ pass’d gave me such an idea of
“ the life I’m doom’d to, that I
“ could not contain myself—however
“ I beseech you both not to take any
“ further notice of it.”

We both gave him our promise we would not, and I was in hopes it might have blown over in a day or two, but he is so very tenacious of having his honour suspected, and she treats him with so much coolness, that in my opinion it rather grows worse, though neither of them seem to take any kind of notice, but attend

tend company as usual; at which time, if there is any difference in their behaviour, it is in an encrease of their civility, being sometimes remarkably polite to each other.

I cannot think but she is very blamable in her suspicions—from whence they took their rise, or on what she grounds them I cannot imagine, for he scarcely ever goes out but what Sir Thomas Charlton or Captain Brydone is with him.

This Captain appears to be always particularly assiduous with her Ladyship, and pays more attention than I should approve of, were I in
either

either her's or George's place—I don't like to be censorious, but I am of half an opinion that he is at the bottom of all this mischief.

Sir Thomas remained longer in town than was his first intention, in expectation of meeting with his Grace of G. but on receiving a letter from the venerable Lady Charlton, in which she informed him that she was very much indisposed and expressed a desire for his return, he sat off this morning and George is gone part of the way with him.

My brother has faithfully promised that in the course of a few days he will

will bring me down to you, therefore am I in the most sanguine hopes that before long I shall have it in my power personally to tell my dear Lady Betty how much I have regretted the loss of her sweet company, and to enumerate the many hours that have been a total vacuity which her desirable presence would so amply have engag'd. With the greatest pleasure shall I bid adieu to this confus'd metropolis, pleas'd with the idea of once more enjoying ease, peace, content, and, that which comprizes more than all the rest, the blessing of your ever-valuable society.

your sincere friend,

ANN DERVILLE.

LET-

LETTER XVII.

LORD DERVILLE,

TO

SIR THOMAS CHARLTON.

Oh, Charlton!

MY heart will burst!—my torture is inexpressible!—to be thus betray'd! by those in whose faith I should have thought my soul secure, is too much for mortal fortitude to withstand!—I cannot bear it!—the more I reflect the more it preys upon my vital spirits and incapacitates me from every resolve!—would you not almost think it

it incredible, that Brydone, he whom I have cherish'd almost from my infancy, should prove to me, his friend, his patron, the worst of villains! and the once engaging Lady Derville, a prostitute, a wanton to his pleasures? By heaven had the whole world reported it I should have thought their characters traduc'd, and the tale a lie—but I saw—yes, to my confusion I was an eye witness to their infamy and my disgrace.

If I can sufficiently compose myself I'll give you the particulars, as far as I know, of this hell-born transaction—After I parted with you I return'd immediately home—enquir'd
who

who was in the house—was told Captain Brydone had been there some time—I search'd one room, then another, but to no purpose, and concluded he might have gone out again without being perceiv'd by the servants.

I was upon the eve of returning out with a view of obtaining an hour or two's amusement, when, on passing her ladyship's dressing room, I inadvertently turn'd in, and there, Charlton, was a scene that almost petrified me—I was struck motionless for some moments, and lucky it was on my faculties return I had no sword, or, in my first heat, murder would have

have been the certain consequence— he flew to his and drew it, naturally expecting some such salute, but my rage subsiding, I opened my breast and bid him complete the business he had begun, and send the wretched Derville after his injured honour.—A silence ensued, but on finding my feelings were likely to be too forcibly oppressed by their ingratitude I retired, leaving them together—yes, he who, at one time, would have quarreled with straws, where honour was concerned, quietly withdrew like a base paltroun from the vile contaminator of his lawful bed.—I had some thoughts of demanding, what the world calls satisfaction, but is it

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possible he can be so lost to every tie of gratitude as to meet me on such terms; or indeed how can I lift up my hand against the life of a man who has ever been as dear to me as though he was my brother—certain this act is the more atrocious in him, and calls for greater vengeance—But what satisfaction, should I be successful, could I receive from beholding him bleeding in the field?—or provided it should be terminated without such serious consequence, would my wrongs be in the least abated by reflecting, that he had courage, or obstinacy in his guilt, sufficient to lead him ~~on~~ with a resolution of standing to be shot at?—both he and Lady Derville.

Derville would be as criminal as before, my sense of the injury as great, nor my unhappiness on the occasion at all appeased—and even this is making the best of such satisfaction, neglecting the idea that the aggrieved has an equal chance to fall with the aggressor.

Was it for this, Tom, that she accused me of keeping a mistress? was her feigned suspicion assumed purposely to prevent my being too circumspect, and by making home disagreeable, drive me abroad, that she might have more opportunities of entertaining her paramour, and at the same time an occasion to complain to

the world of my neglect—to shadow her guilt with a circulation of my inconstancy, is a species of art beyond what I could have supposed to have been in her nature.—But then, was she not assisted by the ingenuity of that perfidious scoundrel, and who can tell what he may have asserted to accomplish his ends? perhaps he actually persuaded her into a belief of what she accused me—I know he has a cunning that will impose on the most wary—yet, allowing that to be the case, it is no extenuation of her guilt, for had she never have given him encouragement the least liberty was more than he dared presume to take—trifles granted at first are frequently the founda-

foundation for the greatest familiarities; and the female who wishes to preserve her virtue should as cautiously guard against a constant repetition of the slightest freedom, as she would against an attempt of the highest complexion; for liberties proceed in such a regular gradation, that she will in the end find no more difficulty in granting the last favour than she had formerly experienced in the first.—Flattery is the bane of the whole sex, and so tenacious are they of being deprived of the least particle, that they will set prudence at defiance and frequently sacrifice their honour rather than relinquish the grossest bait.

But why should I perplex myself with their foibles, or tease you by recounting such insignificant remarks—yet when the mind is over-burthened it will naturally pursue those ideas which seem to bear a resemblance with the cause of its uneasiness, and frequently debate upon trifles, though its own concerns are of the highest magnitude.

This has been my present case; I could dwell on indifferent subjects while I cannot bear the reflection of my own situation—To be the very wretch I always dreaded!—and that in such early days!—Had I not behaved with the greatest circumspection,

LORD DERVILLE. 151

tion, but proceeded in the random line I had been used to, it would not have so much affected me—but to be rendered miserable in spight of all my endeavours, and that by a bosom friend!—it is too much—I must lay down the pen, unable to write any more, being quite sick at heart!—
Adieu!

your's, as usual,

DERVILLE.

L 4

LET.

LETTER XIX.

MRS. BUCKLE,

TO

LADY DERVILLE.

My dear Arabella,

ALTHOUGH I am griev'd at the indifference of Lord Derville and your unhappiness, yet I cannot think your own behaviour defensible—so far from it, that, to judge from the abstract you sent me, I must condemn you as highly reprehensible, for flying to extremities when they might have been avoided—I am still of opinion

nion

nion that had you candidly acquainted his lordship with the cause of your suspicion all would have ended amicably—not in that menacing manner you unfortunately took, but rather as though you were trusting him with the secret in confidence—for men, my love, I mean those of integrity, are of a lordly cast, nor will suffer the least of their consequence to be taken forcibly from them, yet only place a reliance on their honour and they will deny you nothing, endeavour to oblige and you may almost guide them at pleasure.

Let me, before I give any answer to your question ask, whether, in your
con-

conscience you have a just convincing reason for doubting his honour and generosity.

I am apprehensive there is some detestable wretch, some perfidious enemy to your eternal peace has poison'd your mind with accumulated falsties, for I cannot conceive from all you have said he is guilty of the accusation.

To speak freely, I do not like your connection with Brydone, his making himself so assiduous, has to me a very singular appearance — no doubt did you entertain of Lord Derville till he inspired you with it—no proof of
his

his inconstancy but what he has been concern'd in procuring—have a care, my dear Bella, you do not become a dupe to his artifice, and too late be convinc'd he has only been plotting your destruction.

As for what you observ'd at the play-house, on which you place great stress, I cannot perceive the least impropriety, for if my sister, poor, unhappy wretch! does exist in a life of infamy, was it any thing more than what was natural for him, who had known her in a different line, to behold her with inward compassion, and that pity which arose from the goodness of his heart, you must construe

construe as a convincing proof of his guilt, but

———— Trifles light as air,
Are to the jealous confirmations strong,
As proofs of holy writ ;

which never would have been thy case had you been guided by your own disposition—for no breast was more open to the distresses of a friend or ready to share in their sufferings than thine—be rul'd by me, throw this assum'd credulity aside, be once more yourself and happiness will again return.

I am very much distressed by Henrietta's misconduct, and will do all
in

in my power to draw her back to peace, and the pursuits of virtue, my mama being willing to receive her with kindness—if, therefore, you can learn her place of residence, and convey her a letter, which I will send to you by the next post, I shall esteem it a favour.

That I may obtain my ends with her, and likewise hear of your disagreements being come to a happy termination, is the sincere wish of

your affectionate

CHARLOTTE BUCKLE.

LET-

LETTER XX.

LORD DERVILLE,

TO

SIR THOMAS CHARLTON.

Dear Charlton,

AFTER mature deliberation, I find myself much easier, and more reconciled to the late affair than I imagined would have been the case—but why should I be unhappy for their crimes—is not the injury sufficient, without bearing the pangs of their ingratitude and guilt—no let them suffer, and be brought to a true sense

sense of their error; repent, and meet forgiveness—for my part I shall endeavour to avoid them, forget, as far as is in my power, that we ever were connected, and leave them unmolested to follow their own libidinous pursuits.

I have seen her but once since, which interview I requested, having come to a resolution in what manner I should proceed—She met me in the drawing-room, rather, as I thought, with an air of fullness than contrition—but however as that was a matter of little or no consequence, I began nearly to the following effect:

“ It

“ It would be needless, Lady Der-
“ ville, to expatiate on my surprize
“ or feelings on the discovery I have
“ made, it is sufficient to say I am
“ too well acquainted with the fact
“ for you to attempt a denial—I have
“ not requested this interview, ma-
“ dam, with an intent either to
“ offend or upbraid you, or for
“ fruitless altercation; but merely to
“ acquaint you with the resolution I
“ have taken, and the methods I
“ intend to pursue.

“ Although my honour was un-
“ fortunately treated with careles-
“ ness, yet shall I feel a remorse in
“ exposing your frailty, and surren-
“ dering

“ dering you up to the scoff of the
 “ world—It is necessary, however, in
 “ vindication of my own conduct,
 “ that Sir William Spencer and the
 “ Duke of G. should be acquainted
 “ with the whole transaction—let
 “ them procure us a divorce, upon
 “ any excuse and in the most private
 “ manner, and it shall not be thro’
 “ me the affair becomes public—let
 “ it be reported that we parted upon
 “ slight variance, and there I hope
 “ it may end—I will write to them
 “ for this purpose—have you any
 “ you any objections, madam?”

“ Lord Derville is to act as he
 “ thinks proper.”

“ It would have given me more
“ satisfaction had it met with your
“ concurrence; but being left for
“ my determination I will about it
“ instantly.”

I accordingly went and wrote to them both, stating the particulars, and soliciting them to meet and determine it to the satisfaction of themselves and her, as I should be ready to acquiesce to whatever they thought honourable.

If, Charlton, it can be concluded without our being subject to the lash and scurrility of the prints, and held forth as a proper topic for the gossip-
ing

ing tribe of fribbles, disappointed old maids, and splenetic young ones, I shall be glad; if not, I must apply to some of my noble friends that have been in the same dilemma, whom I have seen laugh at the attacks and enjoy the ridicule.

Lady Ann is returned to Lady Plomer's as I could not think of keeping her in the house with such a blessed example, lest you should have the same cause to execrate the sex that I have—you indeed do not deserve so bad of them, nor do I believe, if I may be allowed to say so much of a sister, you run any kind of hazard—heaven forbid you should,

for both your sakes!—You are all that are left, and share my affections between you; make haste, therefore, and become one that I may no longer be divided.

I'll come and live with you sometimes, and perhaps we may still be happy—how inconsistent is this, to advise you to take that, which I, as as you find by this letter, am endeavouring to get rid of—a wife!—I hope there is some difference; but however you must all have a trial as well as

DERVILLE.

LET-

LETTER XXI.

CAPTAIN BRYDONE,

TO

CAPTAIN TOWNSEND.

DETECTED, Jack, by all that's unlucky—at a time when we thought ourselves secure from interruption, that fool Derville must needs be blundering in the way of his own disgrace—he had been to accompany Sir Thomas Charlton in his way home, return'd sooner than we expected, and came into the very room

M 3

where

where I was making the best use of his absence.

I was thunderstruck at his appearance, nor was he less so at the discovery.—In the first hurry of my confusion I drew my sword, without any real intention of doing him an injury, I assure you; but instead of receiving a similar return, he open'd his breast, made a heroic speech, and then left us.

Deeply affected at his manner, it was some moments before I could recover myself sufficiently to notice the lady, who I then perceiv'd extended on the floor to all appearance dead—

my

my attention was now diverted to the care of her, and to endeavour, if possible, to bring her to herself without alarming the family, which with much difficulty I effected.

What passed betwixt us, only her desiring me to quit the house immediately, a request I had no kind of inclination to deny, is more than I am able to inform you, or more I suppose than you will concern yourself about—However, when I got home I began to ruminate on what would most likely be the consequence, and to guard, as far as was in my power, against the worst that might happen.

For the space of two days was I kept in the greatest suspense, not being able to hear by any means what I had to expect, or in what manner he was proceeding—at length a note from her put an end to all doubts:—She informed me that he had acquainted her with his determination for being divorc'd, and was taking measures accordingly.

The person who brought the note I found might be trusted with an answer, which I immediately wrote, and in it most pathetically requested to see her—this she granted—we met, nor did we part before she kindly agreed, as soon as matters were adjusted,

justed, to become 'my' beloved partner, to share with me the cares and pleasures of this life, and to accompany me the world through—therefore you need not place any hopes of seeing me untill I can bring my little angel likewise.

I shall now bid adieu to all my wild frolicks, and live for her alone—In vain may the beautiful damsel hang out her lures to draw me from my adoreable Arabella—I feel an affection for her, Townsend, beyond what I ever experienced for the whole sex.—It is true I have robbed a worthy friend of an inestimable treasure—I own it frankly and cannot

not excuse the deed; yet he may depend I will preserve it with all that care and tenderness I would my own heart's blood!—Soon I hope to be with you, accompanied by her who will ensure happiness to,

your sincere friend,

FRANK BRYDONE.

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LORD DERVILLE. 171

LETTER XXII.

MISS MARNSDOWN,

TO

LORD DERVILLE,

Oh, Derville!

How was it possible that I who love, who adore you, should ever consent to be an instrument in rendering you miserable?—what alleviation could I foolishly imagine it would be to see you unhappy?—No, my Lord, you are still too dear, too far rooted in my heart ever to be erac'd, and too predominant in my affections ever
for

for revenge, in return for your inconstancy, to give me one moment's true satisfaction—I am conscious my own imprudence made me an object totally unworthy your honourable consideration, and to that, and that alone, ought I to attribute my ruin, nor condemn you for taking advantage of a folly that instead of endeavouring to conceal I was proud in making conspicuous.

Yet, Derville, have I been so weak as to colleague against your happiness, to follow implicitly the directions of a designing wretch, with a view of undermining your everlasting peace—he told me you had misus'd him, and
that

that he only fought retaliation—expatiated on the sweets of revenge for past injuries, and so far wrought upon my easy faith, that, I confess, it was with some degree of pleasure I became his associate.

How far this Captain Brydone has succeeded in his intentions I have not been informed, but a letter from my sister has thoroughly convinc'd me of the error I was guilty of, and fully determined me to make every atonement I possibly could, by giving this information of the villainy that is in agitation and forming against you in the breasts of those where you think yourself most secure.

I know

I know his principal intent was to ruin your domestic felicity by exciting a jealousy between you and Lady Derville, but I hope this communication of his designs will prevent any such event from taking place; or, at least, put an end to any suspicions of that kind which may have arose in either your breasts—Had I not been over-rul'd by my obstinacy, but taken your advice and retir'd into the country, I should not have given this additional proof of my weakness—I then wanted—I know not what I wanted—love, rage, disappointment, and every other tormenting passion, had full possession of my soul and depriv'd me of all consideration—

your

your absenting yourself entirely, and never hearing that you made the least enquiry concerning me, I conceiv'd were visible marks of your triumph and contempt, not recollecting how hazardous for your happiness a continuation of our correspondence might have been—I idly imagined, provided you had ever possess'd the least regard, you would certainly not totally have neglected me, forgetting how necessary it was for us to endeavour to forget each other.

In this situation of mind the perfidious Captain Brydone found me, and easily prevail'd on my credulity to seek revenge—my heart frequently
would

would check my career and upbraid me with ingratitude (for surely some gratitude was due to him that might have left me a prey to necessity, for placing me in a state of independance) but still this wretch with the most artful and invidious arguments would urge me to proceed, and, in despite of every resolve, was sure to gain the ascendancy.

Let, I beseech you, this candid confession of my errors have some influence in obtaining forgiveness for them, especially as you may rest secure from ever being again interrupted through my means, having come to a resolution of accepting

Charlotte's

Charlotte's invitation to return to my mama, who promises to receive me without upbraidings, and to bury my late failings in oblivion—I will there, by my future conduct and a life of unaffected contrition, endeavour to atone for the past, and make myself, in some little degree, deserving such unexampled tenderness. — Farewell, my dear Derville! may you long live and enjoy every blessing this world can afford, and should your thoughts, in rambling o'er your youthful days, happen to light on that part wherein I was concern'd, let me entreat you not to condemn, with too much severity, the failings of

HENRIETTA MARNSDOWN.

LETTER XXIII.

SIR THOMAS CHARLTON,

TO

LORD DERVILLE.

NEVER, Derville, did I experience so much anxiety and uneasiness as since last we parted—such a variety of distressing circumstances came together, that I can hardly determine which affected me most—Scarcely were my apprehensions for the life of my dear Lady Charlton abated, who, thank heaven, is perfectly recovered, before I became a partaker in your unhap-

pinefs—my furprife, on reading your letter, I am fure was little fhort of what you felt on the difcovery—I have frequently expreffed my diflike of Brydone's principles, though I never fufpected him capable of fuch villainy; indeed I fhould have thought it an injury to human nature to fuppose there exifted a man fo deftitute of honour, friendship and gratitude—What can be faid of her, one of Nature's love-
lieft patterns!—but you have already too forcibly felt the effects of her infidelity, and I wifh not again to waken your fenfibility—I receiv'd great fatisfaction from your laft, in finding you fo compos'd, and highly approve of the methods you have taken.

N 2

Your

Your generous sentiments respecting my success with Lady Ann demand my warmest acknowledgements, but my heart is too much oppress'd, at present, to make a proper return—as my farther uneasiness is occasioned by that pest to society, that infamous Brydone, I'll send you the particulars; I was sitting with Lady Charlton when the servant inform'd me a lady wish'd to speak with me—I attended the summons and waited on her into the parlour, where she immediately accosted me with :

“ I presume I have the honour of
“ addressing myself to Sir Thomas
“ Charlton ?

“ I

“ I believe, madam, I am the only
“ one of that name.”

“ You knew Miss Lucy Seldown ?”

“ Perfectly, madam ! — Nothing I
“ hope has happened to her !”

“ Alas ! Sir, she is no more !”

“ Poor girl !—in her I may say I
“ have lost a sister.”

“ Nor was you, I believe, less than
“ a brother in her affections—it was
“ that, Sir, which induc'd me to take
“ this journey in hopes you will re-
“ venge her wrongs—the following
particulars

“ particulars that I learnt with great
“ difficulty will best speak them—A
“ Captain Brydone, by the most art-
“ ful address, had insinuated himself
“ into the good graces of her parents,
“ nor was he totally indifferent to
“ Lucy herself—by some wicked means
“ he got himself secreted in her cham-
“ ber, and basely taking advantage
“ of her situation accomplished his
“ diabolical designs—time after time
“ he promised to marry her, but as
“ soon as he perceiv'd she was with
“ child, took a sudden opportunity
“ of quitting the town, and she never
“ heard of him afterwards—Her con-
“ dition became every day more and
“ more distressing as it became more
“ difficult

“ difficult to conceal—at length it
 “ was discovered—the wretch, her
 “ father, notwithstanding he is a
 “ preacher of the Gospel, was so far
 “ a brute as to treat her with the most
 “ opprobrious language, and then
 “ turn’d her out of doors—I live in
 “ the neighbourhood, and as I was
 “ returning home in the evening found
 “ the poor thing stretch’d on the
 “ ground, almost dead with grief—I
 “ endeavoured to raise her, but to no
 “ purpose; her spirits were entirely
 “ exhausted, her speech gone, and I
 “ thought her then expiring—Not be-
 “ ing far from the vicar’s house, I
 “ got some assistance and convey’d her
 “ to it, when he had the inhumanity,

“ notwithstanding her situation, to re-
“ fuse her admittance — shock’d at
“ his brutality, I had her convey’d
“ to my own home, where, on ren-
“ dering her every assistance, she
“ came to herself.—After living in
“ the greatest misery for about a
“ month, she bid adieu to this un-
“ feeling world, and took her flight
“ to a more bless’d abode.—During
“ her illness I frequently waited on
“ her father, but could never pre-
“ vail on him to see her, receive her
“ into his house, or disburse a shil-
“ ling for her support.—She con-
“ tinually wish’d for strength to be
“ enabled to come to you—certain
“ the goodness of your heart would
“ recom-

“ recommend her to the protection
 “ of the worthy Lady Charlton.—
 “ from her frequent mentioning you
 “ I presum’d you was the only per-
 “ son that would resent the cruelty
 “ of her father, which I would have
 “ undertaken myself, but being a
 “ lone woman, could have little or
 “ no hopes of exposing such a mon-
 “ ster.”

I promised to exert my power in endeavouring to render such a wretch obnoxious to society—the good lady shed abundance of tears as she recounted the unhappy fate of my poor Lucy!—O Derville, what monsters does this world produce!—how much

to

to be regretted that in so blest'd a constitution as ours there is not a corporeal punishment for such unnatural and villainous proceedings—That my dear, amiable Miss Seldown should become a prey to the designs of an artful scoundrel, and fall a sacrifice to the cruelty of an unfeeling parent, will ever be remembered by me with horror.

When your own affairs are a little settled I will implore your assistance to exhibit this detestible vicar in his true colours, and try if we cannot in some manner torture him, and fully revenge the untimely death of such an angel.—As for Brydone, I
know

know not what punishment can be inflicted on him—your reasons against duelling are so very cogent that I shall decline all thoughts of calling him out, though I should most willingly hazard my life in the cause—Let me hear from you soon, and should there happen an opportunity to render me any service with his Grace of G. as you will undoubtedly see him, it will be an addition to the many favours that have been already receiv'd by

your sincere friend,

THOMAS CHARLTON.

LET.

LETTER XXIV.

LORD DERVILLE,

TO

SIR THOMAS CHARLTON.

I GIVE you my word, Charlton, your account of Miss Seldown has greatly affected me, and the more so because I now find I was a confidant in his proceedings to seduce her; yet unknowingly, for he never mentioned her to me by any other name than Lucy, nor did my stupidity ever once recollect your Miss Seldown.—

I had

I had endeavoured to persuade him off his design, from his having given me so amiable a picture—indeed it was but slightly, though it was as much as could be expected in the hour of dissipation.

I have received a letter from Miss Marnsdown, by which I find he has likewise been tampering with her, and from thence proceeded Lady Derville's suspicion and upbraidings. This letter prov'd of infinite service in my procuring a divorce, which was procured with much less trouble and bustle than I expected, and I am in some hopes of passing unheeded by the wits.

Sir

Sir William Spencer is quite enraged with his daughter, has forbid her his house, and positively swears he will never hold converse with her again—behaved with the greatest politeness, consol'd with me for what I must necessarily feel at such a disaster, and wish'd it was in his power to make me some amends.—Her ladyship, I have since heard, has consented to cohabit with Brydone, and it is reported they are actually set off together for Yorkshire—What a complicated villain it is—but I am happy you give over all thoughts of venturing your life against such a contemptible wretch—no, Tom, let us leave him to rove at large in his iniquity,

iniquity, and no doubt an adequate punishment will then overtake him, and fully repay the injuries he has committed against mankind.

His Grace of G. was very much affected and treated with a kindness beyond what I had ever experienced; condemn'd himself as the sole cause of making me miserable, and declar'd that nothing in his power should be wanting to render the remainder of my life perfectly easy—After making proper acknowledgments for his promises, I told him, since I had been unfortunate myself, there was nothing would give me greater pleasure than seeing my sister happily married.

“ No,

“ No, no, boy ; let’s have no
“ more marriages—we’ve had enough
“ of them already.”

“ But in this case, my Lord, it is
“ widely different—I know my sister
“ loves Sir Thomas Charlton, and
“ he doats upon her—Fearful of
“ meeting a repulse from your Lord-
“ ship, he solicited me, as his most
“ intimate friend, to break the mat-
“ ter and use my interest with you—
“ now, as I am fully convinc’d their
“ hearts are united——”

“ By the Lord, he shall have her,
“ boy ; send for the girl to town, and
“ then send word for him to come
“ and

“ and take her into the country ;
 “ but we will have no parade—no
 “ bustle, mind that—as to the rest
 “ why e’en settle it to your own minds,
 “ and don’t let me be plagued about
 “ the matter, for I positively will
 “ have nothing more to do with
 “ weddings.’

I obey’d his orders in writing for
 the lady, though, by the bye, I did
 not tell her for what purpose, lest
 she should be too well pleased to
 comply—perhaps I should have taken
 the same precaution with you ; but
 I don’t think you are so great a fool
 as you used to be, therefore I sent
 the particulars that you might entirely

divest yourself of all needless doubts, fears, and apprehensions, and come to town, not with a melancholy brow as if you was under condemnation; but let your countenance plainly indicate the pleasure you receive by the cause of your journey.

Promoting your happiness, Charlton, will serve to console my own disagreeable situation; for as yet I cannot quite forget the infidelity of my wife, nor the ingratitude of my friend!—it has left a pressure on my heart almost beyond conception—but as I think it a misfortune that I have hitherto singly experienced I hope there may never again be found so pernicious

pernicious a caitiff to destroy the torch
of Hymen, or a fair so credulous to
put more confidence in the insinuating
addresses of a designing villain than
in the open and candid behaviour of
the man to whom she had plighted
her faith—such is the sincere wish of
your's,

with friendship and esteem,

DERVILLE.

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